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Bureau of Workers' Compensation



Enhanced MEDCO-14 Coming Soon!

Based on BWC stakeholder and employee feedback, we will be releasing an enhanced, easy-to-understand *Physician's Report of Work Ability* (MEDCO-14) form in September.

Using functional medical language, we simplified and condensed the four-page form and instructions to two pages to lessen roadblocks in getting Ohio's injured workers back to work and back to life.

"BWC, Managed Care Organizations (MCO), and employers use the workability information provided by treating physicians in the MEDCO-14 form for managing a safe and early return-to-work process," said Steve Dyer, Senior Director of Operational Policy and Support.



The MEDCO -14 will feature:

- Easy to use instructions.
- Clarified dates and form language.
- Better explanations of the activities injured workers can perform.
- An enhanced snapshot of the worker's abilities at the time of the provider's evaluation.

"In preparation for its release, BWC trained and shared information about the enhanced MEDCO-14 and its process in several webinars in August," said Dyer.

BWC staff, our MCO partners, medical providers, state-fund and self-insured employers, as well as third party administrators and other representatives, participated in these trainings. We look forward to sharing our enhanced MEDCO-14 with you. Once released, the MEDCO-14 form will be available on the forms section of our website.

In addition, an official announcement will be on our website, so stay tuned!

Safety Councils Return to In-Person Meetings

Beginning in July, safety councils returned to in-person meetings after two years of virtual meetings. The rebate for active safety council participation also resumed. Employers will discover program participation is easier than ever with the elimination of several program requirements including semi-annual reports and CEO attendance. We encourage you to attend a local safety council to personally experience the benefits. Visit the [safety councils](#) page on our website for more information or to find the location of the safety council nearest you.

In-Person Training Resumes

SAFETY SERVICES

CATALOG | 2022 - 2023



BWC's Division of Safety & Hygiene is excited to announce we will once again resume in-person safety training. The first in-person safety class will occur Sept. 27 at the Cleveland metropolitan area's Indiana Wesleyan University. Training is scheduled through June 2023 at 11 locations across the state. BWC's [Safety Services Catalog](#) has listings by date for these classes. A listing of classes by location can be obtained [here](#).

The last BWC in-person safety training class occurred in February 2020. BWC has worked tirelessly in providing safety services including safety training to our customers during this challenging period. Over 30,000 participants have completed safety training through distance learning while in-person training was suspended.

Next fiscal year, we will increase in-person course offerings while continuing a well-balanced approach to future training offerings. While some participants prefer in-person training interactions, we have learned that just as many appreciate the convenience of receiving training without the need to drive to a training location. We are happy to serve Ohio employers whether they decide to have participants attend an in-person class, attend an instructor-led [virtual training class](#), view a [webinar](#), or enroll and complete an [on-demand e-Course](#). No matter your preference, we've got you covered!

Upcoming Safety Webinars

The Division of Safety & Hygiene's webinar series has a great lineup of educational and informative webinars scheduled for Sept., Oct., and Nov. 2022. These webinars are live, which allows us to provide educational credits to the attendees who complete the interactive activities and a knowledge assessment at the webinar's conclusion. BWC is accredited by The International Accreditors for Continuing Education and Training (IACET) and offers Continuing Education Units (CEUs) and a variety of BWC discount program credits based on employer participation.

Listed below are the upcoming planned webinars:

- Sept. 13, 2022 - [Safety Training – Keeping the Class Awake](#), Safety Consultant Greg Harmon
- Oct. 25, 2022 - [Fall Protection and Fall Arrest Systems in Construction](#), Safety Consultant Mona Weiss
- Nov. 8, 2022 - [Attention Public Employers—It's Time for Your Safety Check-up!](#), Safety Consultants Kim Mitchem and Roy Williams

For additional information please contact Nicholas Coia by email at nicholas.coia@bwc.state.oh.us or by phone at (234) 207-0470.

New Form: U-157

Under Senate Bill 166 of the 134th General Assembly, employers who provide work-based learning experiences for students enrolled in a career-technical education program can have eligible students' claims excluded from their future premium calculation. A newly created form - [*Request to Exclude Work-Based Learning Pilot Program Claims from Employer's Experience*](#) (U-157) has been created to comply with the legislative change. The form is available on the website under employer forms.

If you have questions on the form, please contact Kendra DePaul, Director of Underwriting at kendra.k.1@bwc.state.oh.us.

New Rule: Spinal Cord Stimulators

BWC has a new rule regarding the use of spinal cord stimulators (SCS) in injured workers. Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) 4123-6-35 will take effect Sept. 1.

This rule is not intended to dissuade injured workers and their physicians from considering a spinal cord stimulator. The purpose of the rule is to help ensure that spinal cord stimulators are used to treat the right injured worker for the right condition at the right time, and to help guide the MCOs in the proper means of approving this treatment.

BWC has approved the use of spinal cord stimulators for the following conditions when the criteria of the rule are met:

- Failed thoracic or lumbar spinal surgery.
- Complex regional pain syndrome.
- Non-operable peripheral vascular disease/limb ischemia.
- Neuropathic pain post-thoracic or post-lumbar surgery.
- Chronic thoracic or lumbar radiculopathy.
- Spinal cord dysesthesias.

BWC will NOT reimburse for use of a spinal cord stimulator to treat:

- Failed cervical spine surgery.
- Neuropathic pain post-cervical surgery.
- Cervical radiculopathy.

- An injured worker with a pacemaker or defibrillator.
- An injured worker with metabolic or alcoholic neuropathy.
- An injured worker with somatization disorder.
- An injured worker with **untreated or uncontrolled** substance abuse disorder, psychosis, or bipolar disorder.

Prior to being considered for a SCS, an injured worker must undergo at least 60 days of conservative care and have undergone a health behavioral assessment and completed any intervention services if identified. The consideration of utilizing vocational rehabilitation services should be documented. A seven-day spinal cord stimulator trial must be completed and the results of this trial must be documented.

BWC's goal with this rule is to prevent delays in treatment approvals and ensure treatment expectations are clear. The full treatment requirements and expectations are included in [OAC 4123-6-35](#) – payment for spinal cord stimulator.

Thank you for all you do for Ohio's employers and injured workers.

Suggestions or questions

We want to continue to provide you with the best customer service possible.

Please email us at [RepConnect](#) for:

- Suggested topic(s) you would like to see in a future RepConnect.
- General questions you have on a claims processing issue.
- If you know someone who wants to be added to the RepConnect distribution list.

Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation

Vision: To transform BWC into an agile organization driven by customer success.

Mission: To deliver consistently excellent experiences for each BWC customer every day.

Core Values: One Agency, Personal Connection, Innovative Leadership, Relentless Excellence.

Established in 1912, the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation is the exclusive provider of workers' compensation insurance in Ohio, serving 249,000 public and private employers.

With nearly 1,600 employees and assets of approximately \$25 billion, BWC is one of the largest state-run insurance systems in the United States. For more, visit www.bwc.ohio.gov.

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